

VOLTA



Volta Region is one of Ghana's ten administrative regions. It is to the east of Lake Volta. Its capital is Ho. The Volta region of Ghana, lies to the east of the Volta lake. The region covers an area of 20,570 square kilometres representing 8.6% of Ghana. Between latitudes 5° 45'N and 8°45'N. Between the Volta Lake by the west and east by the Republic of Togo and south by the Atlantic Ocean. 20,570 sq. kilometers i.e. 8.6% of the total area of Ghana. The Region spans all the vegetational zones of the country stretching from the Atlantic coast in the south to the north.

The region's population in 2000 was 1,635,421. This implies, an increase of 35.0 per cent over the 1984 count 1,211,907, giving an annual growth rate of 1.9 per cent. The intercensal growth rate shows little change from 2.0 per cent in 1970, 1.8 per cent in 1984 and 1.9 per cent in 2000. The population density of the region increased from 59 persons per square kilometre in 1984 to 79.5 persons in 2000.

The age structure of the population indicates that all the districts of the region have a young population, typical of most developing countries. The regional distribution of the population, aged 0-14 years, is 41.1 per cent compared to 44.2 per cent in 1984. Nkwanta (47.3%) and Krachi (46.4%) have the highest proportion of the population, aged 0-14 years. The Total Fertility Rate (TFR) for the region (3.5) is lower than the national rate of 4.0. Nkwanta District recorded the highest TFR (4.4), while Keta recorded the lowest (2.6).

As is the case with a young population, the dependency ratio is relatively high for all the districts. The regional overall dependency ratio is 92 dependants to 100 working people. The sex ratio is lower than 90.0 in five districts; it is between 90.0 and 100.0 in four other districts. In the Jasikan, Kadjebi and Krachi, Districts, the sex ratios are higher than 100.0.

The proportion of the population living in urban localities (population of 5,000 or more) in the region has increased from 20.5 per cent in 1984 to 27.0 per cent in 2000, with the highest proportion of the population living in urban areas the in Keta (53.0%). There are 34 urban localities in the region. Keta town (Keta) has been identified as a town which has declined at the rate of 1.9 per cent per annum over the past 30 years.

The decline in the population of Keta is due mainly to the sea erosion which caused population movements out of the town and also affected commercial and other activities. Kadjebi, Anyako and Kpedze are other urban localities which had virtually no growth during that period. Of all the urban localities, Juapong, Keta, Krachi, Banda and Worawora are the only localities where males outnumber females.

For the region as a whole, the usual resident population of 1,668,568 is 2.0 per cent higher than the de facto count of 1,635,421. Except for the Ho, Hohoe and the Nkwanta, Districts, the number of people who usually reside in the districts, is more than those present on Census Night.

Political Administration With the exception of the south most part, most of the region north from Ho, was part of the German colony of Togoland. The south most part, which was first colonized by the Danes and later on transferred to the British, was administered as part of the Gold Coast, now Ghana.

After the defeat of the Germans in World War I, the German colony of Togoland was partitioned. One portion was placed under the protectorate of Britain and became known as the British Togo. The other, under French protectorate, became the French Togo, now the Republic of Togo. Both Togo under the British protectorate and Togo under the French protectorate were under the umbrella and supervision of the Trusteeship Council of the League of Nations, now the United Nations.

While Togoland under French Trusteeship was administered by its own Governor appointed by the French, the British protectorate of Togoland, later to be known as the Trans-Volta Togo (TVT), and then as the Volta Region (VR), was administered by the Governor of the Gold Coast who reported on the British protectorate directly to the Trusteeship Council of the League of Nations, now the United Nation (U.N). In 1954, the U.N sent a Visiting Team to the British Togoland. This team recommended a plebiscite to be held in 1956 to decide on the wishes of the people on the issues of whether the Trust Territory should be integrated into, or secede from, the Gold Coast.

The result of this plebiscite was not decisive. However, when it became clear that the Gold Coast was to become independent in 1957, the British Government formally informed the Trusteeship Council that it would not be possible for Britain to administer the British Protectorate, then the Trans-Volta Togoland (TVT) separately, after the Gold Coast became independent. The British Government therefore recommended that the Trans Volta Togoland be integrated into the Gold Coast. This suggestion did not go down well with a portion of the people, particularly the Ewe speaking, who opted in the plebiscite to join the French Togo, which then attained the status of an "autonomous republic.

After independence, the Parliament of Ghana adopted a resolution to merge and integrate the Trans Volta Togo with Ghana, under the name Volta Region. The structure of the decentralized administrative system is made up of the Regional Coordinating Council and the District Assembly. The Regional Co-ordinating Council (RCC) comprises the Regional Minister who is the overall political head of the region, his Deputy, representatives of the Regional House of Chiefs, the District Chief Executives of the region, the Presiding Members of the 12 Districts Assemblies and representatives of the various decentralized Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAS). The Regional Co-ordinating Council is headed by the Regional Coordinating Director who act as the Secretary to the RCC and has the overall responsibility for the local government administration of the region.

The District Assembly is to "exercise power and administrative authority in the District, provide guidance, give direction to, and supervise all other administrative authorities in the district". The District Chief Executive (DCE) is responsible for the day-to-day executive and administrative functions of the District Assembly and is the chief representative of the Central Government in the district. He is appointed by the President with the prior approval of not less than two-thirds majority of the members of the Assembly present and voting at the meeting. The District Co-ordinating Director (DCD) who heads the district bureaucracy and is Secretary to the Assembly, assists the DCE. The Assembly itself has Urban, Zonal and Town/Area Councils, which are supported by Unit Committees. Constituencies, which are either a smaller zone of the District or in some cases, just the same as the District, elect members to the national parliament.

The constituencies, which are either a smaller zone of the district or in some cases, just the same as the District, elect members to the National Parliament. The Area Councils and the Unit Committees also elect members who are responsible for the organization at the lower levels of the political administrative structure.

The highest political body is the Regional Coordinating Council, which is chaired by the Regional Ministers, and has representatives from the various District Assemblies, the Regional House of Chiefs and heads of various decentralised MDAs.

The Regional Coordinating Director is the secretary to the Council. The District Assembly is presided over by the Presiding Member who is elected by at least two-thirds of the members present and voting.

Economic Characteristics

The Agriculture/Hunting/ Forestry industry is the largest sector in the region and indeed in all the districts, except the Keta District, where Fishing is the main industry. Males predominate in the Construction; Transport/Storage and Communication sectors while females predominate in the Wholesale/Retail Trade and the Hotels/Restaurant industries. The information on the employment

status reveals that majority of the people in the region are self-employed (i.e. both self-employed with employees and self-employed without employees). Every eight out of 10 working people, in all the districts, are self-employed. On the average, in the districts, about 14.0 per cent of males and 6.0 per cent of females are employees. In all, 697,752 people are employed in all the six sectors of the economy. This represents an increase of 27.0 per cent over the 1984 figures. The private informal sector engages eight out of every 10 working persons (82.9%) while the private sector as a whole (i.e. both the formal and informal sectors), employs nine out of every 10 working people in every district.

Industry

A significant proportion (15.2%) of the economically active are employed in wholesale and retail trade. Apart from Krachi, Nkwanta, Jasikan, North Tongu and Akatsi that have low levels, all other districts have more than 10 per cent employed in this sector. In fact, in Ketu and Keta about 25 and 20 per cent, respectively, are employed in wholesale and retail trade.

Manufacturing is also important in the industrial sector of the region. 10.9 per cent are engaged in manufacturing at the regional level. However, South Tongu (19.2%), Keta (14.2%) and Ketu (13.9%) have relatively higher proportions.

The sex distribution of the population in the various industries presents an interesting pattern. In six of the 17 industries, the proportion engaged is about the same for both males and females. The male population, however, is higher in seven of the industries compared with four by females. There is a wide disparity in the proportion of men and women engaged in nine industries, namely Fishing, Construction, Wholesale and Retail Trade, Hotels and Restaurants. The rest are Transport and Communication, Manufacturing, Education, Community, Social and Personnel Services and Public Administration and Defense. The percentage of the females is higher than that of males in the Wholesale and Retail Trade while that of the males is much higher in the Fishing industry.

Employment status

It can be observed that in all the districts, over two-thirds of the economically active population are self-employed without employees. The Ho District (72.6%), with the smallest proportion of the self-employed without employees, is far below the regional average of 78.0 per cent while the Akatsi District has the highest proportion of 84.3 per cent. Such a high proportion of the self-employed without employees poses 55 economic and social problems since it makes tax mobilization difficult, social security of workers not assured and allows little room for reinvestment because of low turnover.

On the other hand, the proportion of the self-employed with employees is less than 5.0 per cent in all the districts except Krachi (5.1%). Together, the two self-employed categories account for 81.5 per cent of the working population. A sizeable proportion (3.6%-15.9%) of the economically active population is recorded as employees in the districts. For example, in six districts, the proportion recorded as employees (10.6%-15.9%) is higher than the regional figure (10.0%).

Cultural and Social Structure

The people of Volta Region are part of the larger Ghanaian population with just about every ethnic/language group represented in the region. Eight major ethnic groups are represented in the region and about 62 sub-groups speak 56 dialects.

The largest ethnic group in the region is the Ewe people who make up 68.5% of the region's population. They consist of several sub groups. Other major ethnicities include the Guan people (9.2%) made up of over 18 sub groups and the Akan people (8.5%) with over 19 sub-groups. The fourth largest group is the Gurma in the north, forming 6.5% of the region's population. Also present in this region are the Ga-Dangme, Mole-Dagbon, Grusi and the Mande-Busanga.

Although the region is ethnically diverse, the main ethnic groups are the Ewe, Guan, Akan and Gurma. The predominant ethnic group is the Ewe (68.5%). The other relatively large ethnic groups are the Guan (9.2%), the Akan (8.5%) and the Gurma (6.5%). The Mole-Dagbon, Grusi, Mande, Ga-Dangme and the other smaller ethnic groups constitute 7.3 per cent. This pattern runs through nine out of the 12 districts; Kadjebi, Nkwanta, Jasikan and Krachi districts have larger proportions of the Gurma and the Guan. Nkwanta has the lowest percentage of the Ewe (13.2%) and the fourth highest Akan population (11.5%) in the region. The Gurma (44.3%) are the predominant ethnic group in the Nkwanta District, while the Jasikan (40.3%) and Krachi (24.5%) Districts have the largest proportion of the Guan. In the Krachi District, the proportions are almost the same for the Ewe (22.3%), the Gurma (22.6%) which has about 8 sub-groups and accounts for about 6.5 per cent of the population. and the Guan (24.5%) made up of over 18 sub-groups while the Akan comprises over 19 sub-groups. distantly followed by the Akan (14.9%). Each of the other ethnic groups in the region (the Ga-Dangme, Mole-Dagbon, Grusi and the Mande-Busanga) represents less than 2.0 per cent of the population.

In spite of the slight variation of the pattern in the latter three districts, it can be said that not only can the Ewe be found in the entire region, but also that the proportion of Ewe in the districts decreases from southern to the northern districts, particularly from the Hohoe District. It is also worth noting that, despite the higher proportion of Ewes in Hohoe, almost a quarter of the population of the District are Guan. This is due to the indigenous Guan who inhabit areas or towns such as Akpafu, Lolobi, Santrokofi, Likpe, among others.

The Social Structure

The people of the region are organized under chiefs at the lineage and settlement levels. A lineage comprises extended families that trace their genealogy to the same ancestor. The extended families also have heads who are most often the oldest male. Ownership of property is passed on by patrilineal inheritance in 11 of the 12 districts. Some lineages in the Kadjebi and a few in the Jasikan Districts are of the Akan lineage, and practice matrilineal inheritance.

The Volta Regional House of Chiefs, like similar institutions in the other regions, was established by statute in 1958. By Legislative Instrument 991 of 1974, defined the composition of the Volta Regional House of Chiefs to consist of 15 paramount chiefs (in charge of 15 Traditional Councils) and 17 rotating members (from 17 groupings) bringing the total membership to 32.

The Traditional Council is composed of several Area Councils. Basically, the traditional authorities administer stool lands, holding them in trust for the people, and arrange the celebration of traditional festivals. They are also the custodians of traditional beliefs and customs, passed on from one generation to another. The traditional authorities also have courts which adjudicate on matters relating to stool lands, lineage and family lands, chieftaincy title disputes, violations of traditions and disputes between localities, lineages, families and individuals. In the Volta Region, no Paramountcy owes allegiance to another Paramountcy.

Religion

The people of the region originally practised the Traditional religion. However, over a century and half ago, with the arrival of Christian missionaries in the region, many have converted to Christianity. While the Ewe, Guan and the Akan are mostly Christians, majority of the Hausa, Kyamba, Kotokoli, Kokomba, Nanumba and Gurma, particularly in the northern districts, are Moslems.

Of a total population of 1,635,421, 67.2 per cent are Christians; 21.8 per cent practise Traditional Religion, and 5.1 per cent are Moslems. The proportion of males (66.8%) who subscribe to the Christian faith is, however, slightly lower than that of the females (67.5%). Among the Christian group, the proportion of females (42.0%) in the Protestant and Pentecostal churches is higher than those of the males (40.6%). A larger proportion of the female population (22.3%) practise traditional religion than males (21.2%); In the case of Islam the reverse is the situation. It shows that a higher proportion of males (5.7%) than females (4.9%) do not subscribe to any religion.

Literacy

Literacy is measured by the ability to read and write a language with understanding. The 2000 Census collected information on the English Language because it is the official language of the country. Literacy in the English Language and in any one Ghanaian Language is classified together while literacy in any additional Ghanaian Language or any other Language is classified as "other". According to the 2000 Census, 57.9 per cent of the adult Ghanaian population is classified as literate in English only (16.4%) or in a known Ghanaian language only (2.5%) and 38.1 per cent are literate in both English and a Ghanaian Language. Other languages constitute 0.8 per cent; nearly two fifths of the population (42.1%) are not literate.

Current School Enrollment

Improved access to education is reflected in the high adult literacy rate (58.3%). The male literacy level (68.7%) in the region is higher than the national average of 66.4 per cent for males, whilst that of the females (49.1%) is almost the same as the national average of 49.8 per cent. Primary school enrolment rates in the region (Total 59.0%; Males 56.7% and Females 61.6%) are slightly lower than the national average of 60.3 per cent (Males 58.6%; Females 62.3%). Middle school enrolment in the region is higher for males (23.5%) and females (22.9%) than that at the national level for males (22.6%) and females (21.9%). Senior secondary school enrolment in the region is equally higher in the region for males (9.8%) and for females (7.9%) than at the national level for both males (8.9%) and females (7.6%).

Majority of children not attending school appear to be from rural poor households. While school enrolment in the region is higher than the national average, satisfaction with the quality of both primary and secondary school education is the lowest in the country. The proportion of people satisfied with primary (19.0%) and secondary school (21.0%) education in the region, is low compared with 40.0 per cent for the primary school and 43.0 per cent for the secondary school, for the country. The poor conditions of the educational facilities rank highest among reasons for dissatisfaction. The main complaints are lack of books, supplies (or both), and lack of teachers.

Educational Level Attained

More than one in three people have attained both primary and Middle/JSS, in all districts in the region. The rates attain 40.0 per cent and higher for middle school in Ho, Kpandu, Hohoe, Jasikan Districts and for males only in Kadjebi. This ratio is very much the same for both males and females, although the ratio is slightly higher for females than for males. An examination of the distribution of the educational attainment figures suggests that while the percentage of females tends to be higher than that of males, at the primary level and almost equal at Middle/JSS level, and in few districts slightly higher.

The percentage of males tends to be higher than that of females, particularly, at the higher levels of education. Thus for example, at the Senior Secondary School (SSS) level, there are about 1.4 times more males than females attending school, although the gap is wider for Kadjebi, Nkwanta, Krachi and Jasikan, Districts, than it is for the other districts. On the other hand, North Tongu, Ho, Akatsi and Kpandu Districts seem to retain nearly equal percentage of males and females, at the Secondary School level. The ratio of the male to female gap somehow widens (almost two to one) at the tertiary level in the Kpandu, Akatsi, Jasikan and Kadjebi Districts.

Another pattern worth observing is the fact that Krachi and Nkwanta Districts, which enrol larger than average number of males and females in primary schools, do not necessarily retain them at the secondary and tertiary levels. On the other hand, the Ho and Hohoe Districts, which start with lower than average enrolment into primary classes, have larger than average enrollments into secondary and tertiary institutions. The pattern is similar for both male and female enrollment. The Akatsi District, which appears to be one of the less developed districts in terms of health and social facilities, rather appear to be a higher education achiever. This may be due to the presence of an SSS and a Teacher Training College located in the district. The Ho and Hohoe Districts appear to be higher-level achievers for both males and females.

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